



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Check Out Healthy And Safe Swimming

Healthy and Safe Swimming Week – May 23-29, 2016

SPRINGFIELD – For the upcoming Memorial Day weekend and the rest of the summer, before you jump in the water, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) reminds you of some simple things you can do to stay healthy while swimming.

“Swimming is a great physical activity, and doing a quick check of the water can make sure it’s a healthy one as well,” said IDPH Director Nirav D. Shah, M.D., J.D. “While the Illinois Department of Public Health, along with several local health departments, inspects swimming pools, spas, and water parks, doing a quick check of the water before you get in can help you avoid getting sick or being injured.”

The week before Memorial Day is designated as National Healthy and Safe Swimming Week. This year’s theme, “Check out Healthy and Safe Swimming,” focuses on urging swimmers to do their own quick check of the pool to identify some of the most common health and safety problems.

Why is this important?	Simple and effective prevention steps we can all take.
Every year, serious health and safety violations force thousands of public pools, hot tubs, and water playgrounds to close, according to a report published in CDC’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report .	Check before getting in. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drain at the bottom of the pool’s deep end is visible.• Drain covers at the bottom appear to be secure.• Lifeguard is on duty. If not, safety equipment, such as a rescue ring or pole, is available.• Check with the swimming facility to see what the pH and free chlorine or bromine readings are for the day.

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<p>In 2011–2012, 90 outbreaks nationally were linked to swimming. Chlorine and other disinfectants kill most germs within minutes, but some can survive for days. Pee, poop, sweat, and dirt from swimmers’ bodies mix with chlorine and form chemicals that can make our eyes red and trigger asthma attacks.</p>	<p>All swimmers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay out of the water if you have diarrhea. • Shower with soap before you get in the water. • Don’t poop or pee in the water. • Don’t swallow the water. <p>Every hour—everyone out!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take kids on bathroom breaks. • Check diapers, and change them in a bathroom or diaper changing area—not poolside. • Swim diapers and swim pants are not leak proof and do NOT stop germs or diarrhea from getting into the water.
<p>Drownings: Every day, two children in the U.S. younger than 14 years old die from drowning. It is the leading cause of injury death for children 1–4 years of age.</p>	<p>Keep swimmers safe in the water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure everyone knows how to swim. • Use life jackets appropriately. • Provide continuous, attentive supervision close to swimmers. • Know CPR.

To check the status of a swimming facility licensed by IDPH, use the [IDPH Swimming Facility Search](#) on our website. To learn about beach closures, advisories, and test results, check the online [Illinois Beach Guard System](#).

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